

behalf in making so much possible. We thank his mother, Mary MacFarland; his father, Sergeant Major Murray Small, U.S. Army, Retired; his stepfather, Peter MacFarland; his stepmother, Karen Small; his brother, Matt; sisters Heather MacFarland Wellock, Jennifer MacFarland and Megan MacFarland; stepbrothers Travis and Tyler Baney; and Amanda Charney, who Marc Small very deeply loved.

I join all of the constituents of Pennsylvania's Seventh Congressional District and good Americans everywhere when I pledge that the service and sacrifice of Staff Sergeant Marc J. Small, U.S. Army, will always be remembered and forever honored.

#### SECRETARY CLINTON'S SILENCE IN CHINA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, today the State Department released its annual Human Rights Report, an exhaustive report which documents the human rights abuses of countries worldwide.

The report highlights several disturbing global trends in the area of human rights and goes on to say that these trends "confirm the continuing need for vigorous United States diplomacy to act and speak out," and, yet, America's leading diplomat, Secretary of State Clinton, could not find it in herself to publicly press the Chinese Government on their human rights abuses during her recent visit.

Which begs the question, has the situation improved so dramatically so as to justify relegating human rights to the back burner? Was last year a banner year for the Chinese Government marked by tremendous reforms and greater freedom? Has a new day dawned for the people of China? The answer is no. We need look no further than the State Department's own report that came out today that says such notions could not be further from the truth and would be laughable if the reality of the situation wasn't so sobering.

A few excerpts from the report:

"The Government of China's human rights record remained poor and worsened in some areas. The government . . . tightly controlled freedom of speech, the press (including the Internet), assembly, movement and association."

"Authorities committed extrajudicial killings and torture, coerced confessions of prisoners, and used forced labor. In addition, the Chinese government increased detention and harassment of dissidents."

For people of faith, the situation was especially grim:

"Authorities disrupted church meetings and retreats; detained, beat, and harassed church leaders and church members."

"Harassment of unregistered Catholic bishops, priests, and laypersons continued, including government surveillance and detentions."

This is the State Department's report that came out today.

For North Korean refugees the report had this to say:

"Authorities stepped up efforts to locate, detain, and forcibly return North Koreans to North Korea," basically gulags where they will be persecuted.

On forced labor it said: "Forced labor remained a serious problem," and on and on. I am running because of the time.

For Tibet, here is what the report said:

"The government's human rights record in Tibetan areas of China deteriorated severely during the year. Authorities continued to commit serious human rights abuses, including torture, arbitrary arrest, extrajudicial detention," and then it goes on with much others.

The list goes on. I marvel that there can be such a disconnect between the systematic documented abuses of the Chinese government, the importance, as stated in the report, of the U.S. Government speaking out on behalf of those living under repression and the shocking silence of Secretary Clinton. The Chinese Government could barely contain their excitement about Secretary Clinton's silence.

AP reported that "China gave U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton a glowing review." No wonder they gave her a glowing review because she didn't say anything following her weekend visit, during which she steered clear of human rights issues.

China doesn't want our Secretary to speak on human rights, but that's the very reason why they should speak out on human rights.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, silence in itself is a message, not just to the Chinese Government but to the Chinese people whose struggles are outlined in grim details.

Martin Luther King said, and I quote, "In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends." For the Secretary of State to be silent on the issue of persecution in China, where there can be a number, can you imagine, Mr. Speaker, how a Catholic bishop, or a Buddhist monk or a Protestant pastor or a Muslim Uighur was in prison and the prison guards came around and said, "See, your Secretary of State was in town and she never even raised the issue."

The way to do this, Mr. Speaker, in ending, is the way Ronald Reagan did it in the eighties. Every time President Reagan would go or any Secretary of State would go to Moscow, or whatever, they would speak out on behalf of human rights. Our embassies were islands of freedom.

And so I ask the Secretary to make it clear: Is this a retreat on human rights? Did you just make a mistake? But the sound and the silence is rever-

berating, and it will also have an impact on dictators around the world because they will see the Secretary going to China and not speaking out. Ahmadinejad will do what he wants with regard to the Baha'is, Egypt will do what it wants with regard to the Coptic Christians and on and on, and the world will be a much more dangerous place.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BROUN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BROUN of Georgia addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

□ 1715

#### REASONS FOR THE ECONOMIC DOWNTURN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. AKIN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. AKIN. Mr. Speaker, through the period of the last 6 years, one of the things we have heard pretty commonly in the media has been the tremendous cost of the war in Iraq, and that every day we hear there are more and more millions being squandered on the war in Iraq. So it is an interesting fact to add up all of the spending in the war in Iraq and all of the spending in the war in Afghanistan and add it together. What you find is that there is less spending there than there was in the first 5 weeks of this new year, particularly with the new stimulus bill.

Well, how is was it that we got into such a fix, into such a problem, that our economy seemed to dictate these kinds of draconian solutions? That story actually starts back some number of years. It goes back to the Carter administration, the Community Reinvestment Act and the idea that there were some people that couldn't get a decent home loan. So we were going to tell banks that they had to make some loans to people that were riskier, and maybe even risky enough that some of them couldn't make their loan payments.

That started under the Carter administration, but over a period of time we then developed a couple of organizations called typically Freddie and Fannie, Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae. Those organizations are neither quite government, but really not quite private either. Their objective was to create a source of innovative financing so

that people could afford home loans and the average person could have a piece of the American Dream and own their own house.

Well, over a period of time Freddie and Fannie were established and they took more and more different loans, underwrote various loans for people's homes. By the time we got well through the Clinton years as President, President Clinton demanded that the Freddie and Fannie corporations, if you would call them corporations, had to change their rules, that they had to release more and more loans to people who in effect couldn't pay. So the percentage of these loans that were more marginal were increased.

In the meantime, you had some other things going on. You had the government policy under Greenspan. The Federal Reserve had reduced the interest rate down quite low to about 1 percent, so you had the money being flooded as we moved on with more and more very low priced capital at 1 percent, so people tended to think, hey, this is a pretty good idea. Let's put some of this money in the real estate market, because the real estate market started to boom. In fact, it was in a bubble.

When I came to Congress in 2001, real estate was starting to go up, and by the time 2004 or 2005 came, most of us around here that thought we knew a little bit about economics were kicking ourselves, how come we didn't buy the very biggest house we could possibly find and let the thing double and then quickly sell it.

Of course, there were a lot of people that were doing that. There was a lot of speculation going on. Speculators took advantage of the situation and real estate continued to expand and to expand. In the meantime, what was going on on Wall Street was the fact that because there really weren't any rules, Freddie and Fannie were quasi-governmental, it was assumed that they were going to back people up and back up these loans, and so it became kind of a free ride.

You had all kinds of mortgage brokers traveling around the country saying to people, hey, you want to get a loan? Well, how much do you need? Half a million dollars? Fine. I don't really care whether you have got a job or whether you can pay it back, because I am going to turn the loan right on over. It is going to go over to Freddie or Fannie or to the Wall Street market. They are going to chop it up in pieces, repackage it and sell it all over the world.

So it was one of those situations where we made a very big mistake in terms of government regulation. And we allowed this process to continue to run for some number of years without the proper regulations and control on Freddie and Fannie. So most people have read and understand that what got us into this recession was the fact that we allowed a whole lot of mortgages being made by people who could not pay those mortgages back. So that is how things got started.

Now, you say, well, didn't somebody figure this out? Didn't somebody ring a warning bell or let us know that things weren't going the right way?

Well, in fact they did. What you have here, and this is an interesting day to remember, in *The New York Times*, not exactly a right-wing oracle, *The New York Times*, September 11th, 2003, you have reported there that the President, at the time President Bush, was asking for greater authority to regulate Freddie and Fannie because he believed that what was going on was going to cause a whole lot of trouble. There were all kinds of mortgages and loans being made where it was not at all clear that people would pay them back.

Of course, in the past years, many years before when somebody was going to get a home loan, you would go to your local bank and the banker would take a look and say, "I am not going to loan him money if I don't think he can pay it back." But what we did was we separated the person that was taking that loan, we separated him from the person that was getting the money, and the end result was there wasn't any accountability anymore. So the President said, hey, this is a big problem.

So you have September 11th, 2003, *The New York Times*. The President is saying in there, hey, we need to get some controls on these crazy mortgages that are going on, and he asked Congress to take action to regulate Freddie and Fannie.

At that time, or a year or so later, Congress and the House passed a bill to do that. It went to the Senate and it was killed by the Democrats in the Senate. But in that same article, September 11th, 2003, you have the words of the gentleman here in the House now who is in charge of rewriting the rules, and this is what he said about Freddie and Fannie. "These two entities, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, are not facing any kind of financial crisis, said Representative BARNEY FRANK of Massachusetts, the ranking Democrat on the Financial Services Committee." So the ranking Democrat on the Financial Services Committee is saying Freddie and Fannie are doing just fine, September 11, 2003. The President is saying we need more regulation, there are going to be problems. Then Congressman FRANK goes on, "The more people exaggerate these problems, the more pressure there is on these companies, the less we will see in terms of affordable housing."

Well, this doesn't look like very good prophesy here. Certainly this problem was caused by a lack of regulation. It was caused by the Democrat Party, as is reported in this article in *The New York Times*.

Now, there are people today who want to say that this is a failure of free enterprise. This has nothing to do with free enterprise. This has to do with socialistic government meddling in the real estate market and an unwillingness of the government to be respon-

sible in what the government says it is going to back.

What has happened here is you have got Freddie and Fannie that could do anything they wanted, and we are supposed to, the taxpayer, you and I, are supposed to back up Freddie and Fannie when people make all of these lousy loans. So that is the quick run-down on how we got to where we are with the recession.

Now, when you have a recession, there are a couple different ways to handle a recession, a couple of theories. One of the theories is what FDR did back in the 1930s. Their idea was that if the government spends enough money it stimulates demand. Of course, everybody has been taught this for years in college economic classes, that if the government stimulates the economy by spending enough money, why, then it will just make the recession go away.

That sounds like a pretty cool idea, doesn't it? The government just spends more and more and more money and the economy is going to get better. The only trouble with that is if that really worked, where we have the amount of debt that we have at this time, trillions of dollars of debt, don't you think we would have a great economy?

So we have to ask, what is this theory? It was called Keynesianism. Little Lord Keynes was proposing this idea about the same time Henry Morgenthau, who was the Secretary of Treasury under FDR, was making this proposal. So we have had in the laboratory of history this idea of the government spending a whole lot of money to make the economy better. So we had a chance to do that for 8 years, and Henry Morgenthau tried this whole thing out.

At the end of 8 years, he appears before the House Ways and Means Committee and in 1939, and this is his quotation before the House Ways and Means Committee. "We have tried spending money. We are spending more than we have ever spent before, and it does not work. I say after 8 years, the administration, we have just as much unemployment as when we started, and an enormous debt to boot."

So this is the author, this is the first guy that tried this theory over in this country, just spend a whole lot of money to fix a recession, and he says it doesn't work. You take a look at the numbers and the tremendous amount of joblessness when they started, and when he got all done, they still had a whole lot of unemployment going on. And he said we have tried it and it doesn't work. Yet there are people who still want to hang onto this warmed-over Keynesian idea, and it doesn't work.

So, what does work? It is important for us to not be negative and just say what doesn't work, but what does work. And what does work is more of a supply side kind of model, and we are going to be talking about that in just a minute.

I am joined here on the floor by a very good friend and a gentleman who

has lived a number of careers in this world, one as a medical doctor, a guy with a very bright mind, but also a U.S. Congressman from the State of Georgia. I would yield to the gentleman from the State of Georgia, Congressman BROWN.

Mr. BROWN of Georgia. Thank you, my friend. I appreciate your yielding. I want to just make a couple of comments.

One thing, we have a recent experiment in this kind of economic theory. I think if we look historically, not only did the idea of spending more and more money not work during the Great Depression, in fact the only thing that got us out of the Depression was cranking up the manufacturing sector, the private manufacturing sector, to supply the needs for World War II. That is the only thing that got us out of the Depression.

But I just want to remind you, I know my dear friend from Missouri, Mr. AKIN, remembers just recently the Japanese tried the same kind of philosophy. I don't think it worked there either, did it?

Mr. AKIN. I appreciate the gentleman and the additional point that you are making. I think it is a very persuasive point, because Henry Morgenthau tried this idea for 8 years and it didn't work worth a hoot. In fact, those were his words, we have a lot of debt to boot.

But in addition, we also had the Japanese. They tried it, and it basically was like taking an entire economic decade out of Japan. They had a whole lot of these tax-and-spend fellows over in Japan, and they just went at it hammer and tongs for 10 years. The Japanese economy bumped and bumped and bumped and it never could get off the ground. It is like the plane that didn't have enough propulsion to be able to pull it up in the air. And it was because of the fact that they were just sold on this idea that if they spent enough government money, something would be okay.

It kind of reminds me, I am an engineer by training and they probably shouldn't let us into a political body like this, but it reminds me of somebody grabbing their shoelaces, lifting up and trying to fly around the room.

This is just foolishness. I think most Americans, most of our constituents that are out there, I think they have to look at this idea and think what sort of funny stuff are those people smoking up in Washington, D.C. to think that when you get in hard times economically that what you are going to do is just spend money like mad. I don't think there is anybody in my district dumb enough that when they are in hard times economically they go and buy a brand new big car and spend money like mad thinking it is going to fix the problem. It is almost insanity to look at it that way.

The thing is, as well as the bad examples that we have, you have mentioned one of those, Congressman BROWN, we

have good examples, good examples of the right way to solve the problem. It is not like we are just hopeless and we are in a graveyard spiral with an airplane and there is nothing you can do to fix it. The fact is, there are all kinds of examples of the right thing to do, and that is not the Keynesian model but it is more what people call today a supply side model.

I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. BROWN of Georgia. Thank you, and I appreciate that. Absolutely. I frequently say at home, as I am going around the 10th Congressional District in Georgia, that socialism has never worked; it won't work today, it has never worked in the past, and that is exactly what we are doing.

I described the stimulus bill that we passed here in this House a couple of weeks ago as a steamroller of socialism being shoved down the throats of the American public, and that will strangle our economy and kill the American people economically. I believe, likewise, that we are seeing bill after bill; in fact, just tomorrow we are going to have a housing bill here on the floor that is going to create bigger government and spend more money.

□ 1730

Certainly people need to be able to buy houses. People need to be able to buy cars. The Big Three auto makers are having problems. I have my own dealers at home that talk to me about the car sales. In fact, I visited one and talked to the service people, I talked to the used car people, I talked to the new car people, I talked to the folks across the board, and in a large dealership in the 10th Congressional District back during this last break, a week ago, and they're suffering. People are hurting around this country. And we need to do something. And there is absolutely something that can be done.

Republicans have proposed things that go along with what you're talking about tonight, the supply side, which means that we need to get dollars back in people's hands. We need to have small business be able to have the capital, money, to be able to create a new job, to be able to go out and buy inventory, to be able to do the things that they need to be successful as a small business. And that's the economic engine of America.

I was just watching "Fox and Friends," I guess two mornings ago, and the people there were talking about that the banks are the economic engines of America. They are totally misled. Small business is the economic engine of America.

Mr. AKIN. Reclaiming my time for a minute. What I think I'm hearing you say was something that I just think it's so much common sense and so many Americans understand this. And it's about productivity, isn't it?

If you really look at, just look at your own life, and if you really want to do better, you become more productive. You produce more product. You're

more efficient, and you get more stuff done, and therefore, you can earn more money that way. And that's the same thing. It's not like this is really complicated. You know, there's economists who would like to make it seem complicated so they get to keep that Ph.D. and have a nice job. But it's not that complicated.

When a business or an investor or an entrepreneur puts some money out and makes a good gamble or makes a good investment, it works well, or maybe it doesn't work quite right and then they adjust it a little bit, and then they come up with a better way of doing things, we call that productivity. And in order for that process to work, you have to have, just like oil inside a machine, you have to have a certain amount of liquidity and capital out there for these investors to be investing.

And so the whole logic of what you're saying is, you've got to prime the pump a little bit and let people keep some money so that they can invest it. And of course the thing that kills it is if you start to suck all the money out of the economy, now you don't have anybody investing, and so you start to run into this condition of joblessness. And we understand what that's like. There's all kinds of people.

I yield.

Mr. BROWN of Georgia. You've got a great chart here. I know you're going to explain it to our viewers tonight and show pre-tax relief and post-tax relief. And the great thing—I'll stop here in a second, but the great thing about this chart that you're just fixing to explain is it shows that tax relief will stimulate the economy.

By getting the regulatory burden and the tax burden off of small business, we'll create jobs. We'll have a strong economy. People will have good-paying jobs so that they can buy a car, can buy a house, can pay for their college education for their children or technical education, they can do the things that they need, buy clothes, and all the things that come together to create a strong economy.

So if you would explain that chart for us, I'd appreciate it.

Mr. AKIN. Reclaiming my time. What you're saying is that somehow or other people have trouble making this connection. But if you've got a business that's doing well, they hire people, and that makes jobs. Now, if you're jealous of the guy that owns the business, say you're too rich and I'm going to take you down a peg, and you take all the money away from everybody who owns businesses, then don't be surprised when you don't have as many jobs.

And so one of these things that people, you know, if they want to get real covetous and don't like their neighbor having a fancy-looking car in their driveway, think about it a little bit, because you're really a lot better off if you live in a neighborhood where there's a lot of businesses that are

doing well than if you're in a neighborhood where everybody is unemployed. And you can't let it get you upset that somebody else is doing well if you really want jobs, because if you want to have a job you've got to work for somebody.

But anyway, let's take a look at this. The point of the matter is there's no reason for there to be doom and gloom in America. There's no reason for us to be really upset or kicking our lips around. There are ways to fix the problem we're in. We made some very, very foolish mistakes with poor government regulation and basically misguided socialism that put us into the recession. But it can be fixed. America has come through a lot of challenges, and this is another challenge, and we can do okay with this. But we can't do it by doing the wrong thing.

So what are the examples of what you do in this situation? Well, here's an example. Actually, when I was here in Congress in 2001, when we started—and we did a bunch of tax cuts, and people thought tax cuts help make the economy do better. Well, but that's not entirely true. It's certain kinds of tax cuts that make the difference.

So here you have a picture of what's going on in 2001; this is the year that I came here, and you see we were in the recession. And before this tax relief, right here at this line in the second quarter of 2003, we did a particular kind of tax cut which had a very strong effect. But going before that, we did some tax cuts here, and we still had an average GDP of 1.1 percent. So it wasn't just any tax cut. You just want to send a \$1,000 check to everybody in America, people like it, but it's not going to fix the situation that we are in. No, you have to use your tax money wisely.

So what did we do? In the second quarter of 2003, we did a dividend capital gains tax cut, and we took it from—it had been quite a lot higher—we took it down to 15 percent. And when we did that, let's take a look at what happened. Now, the effect of that, of course, is dividends capital gains is not something that just helps everybody on the street. This is something that really affects people who own businesses, particularly, or people who own money, and you want them to get the money freed up so they will use it to invest and create this productivity.

So here's what happens. We do the tax cuts second quarter 2003. Look at what happens to gross domestic product. We're chugging along at 1.1, it's kind of spotty, and all of a sudden it jumps to 3. And this is going all the way over to 2007. So the effect—now, you could say, well, is that what caused that? Well, if you take a look at this point in history, this is the main thing we did economically.

So you say, well, does that show up anywhere else? In fact, it does show up in some very, very important places. Let's take a look at the second chart, which is what we're very concerned

with today, and that is the problem of job creation. These are all—all the lines going down are jobs that are lost, and so we're losing jobs at an average of almost 100,000 jobs a month. That's what's happening, 100,000 jobs a month being lost.

Now, these lines going up are where we actually had some job creation. But this is an average here. Now, we do this tax cut, and take a look at what happens on the right side in terms of the gain of jobs: 147,000 jobs a month being gained with this one particular cut.

So this isn't rocket science. We did it before. JFK did it. Ronald Reagan did the same kind of thing. And here we go, right in our recent past we did the same thing, and look what's going on.

Now, here's the last thing. Let's say that you really do, as my friend from Georgia was just saying, using the word "socialism." Let's say you really are a happy little socialist and you really want the government to slot money around and redistribute wealth and everything. If you want to do that, one thing you want is a good economy because it gives you more money to play with.

Look what happened here. This is Federal revenues. Federal revenues are going down, just as they've been going down this year because the economy's in bad shape. You turn the economy around with the right kind of tax cut, and take a look at revenues. They're jumping.

So this says everybody wins when the economy is doing well, and this supply side kind of idea of letting money be invested by the productive private sector, just as my friend from Georgia was saying, this is what works.

And there's no reason for Americans to be out of work if we just do the right thing. Instead, what we're doing is we're going to allow this tax cut to expire, and the math that drove these charts is going to go into reverse, and it's going to make the situation worse even than what it is right now.

I yield to my good friend from Georgia.

Mr. BROWN of Georgia. Well, you're exactly right, Mr. AKIN. And I think we're going to see a marked reversal in job creation as the capital gains tax goes higher. In fact, I'd like to remind my colleague, back when, in the last Congress, Republicans and Democrats alike had an alternative plan to the, what I call the Wall Street bailout bill, the TARP fund bill, the Troubled Assets Relief Program, where we were promoting not only not allowing the capital gains tax—keeping it from expiring, but we were promoting lowering that, change the accounting principles that froze all the economic markets. And I fault Hank Paulson, Secretary Paulson, frankly, for not even letting our bill touch his lips or come across his throat. And nobody on the majority side would consider our bill.

We had a plan that would not borrow from our grandchildren, like the TARP funds, Wall Street bailout bill did. Re-

publicans have had a plan, actually, for a stimulus that would have actually stimulated the economy when we passed the stimulus bill a couple of weeks ago. And then now, just today, we voted on a bill that I think is going to exacerbate—that's a medical word that means "make it worse." But it's going to make the problem worse for the American family.

In fact, I hope that President Obama will fulfill his promise he made to the American people. He said that he did not want to—he would not sign a bill that had earmarks in it. This bill today had over 9,000 earmarks in it. Last night he said that the stimulus bill didn't have any earmarks in it, and that's not factual either. That's totally false.

Mr. AKIN. Reclaiming my time. There is a little bit of a gap between the rhetoric and what's actually going on here, isn't there? And so what you've made reference to is—and this is easy for people to get it confused a little bit because this has been happening so rapidly.

The end of last year, we had basically a Wall Street bailout bill at \$700 billion. That is a lot of money. That puts us into uncharted territory. I know you voted against it. I voted against it. And the reason we voted against it was because it wasn't going to work. Quite simply, it was not going to work. We spent \$350 billion of that, came back, and people said, where's the transparency? What happened? You know, this thing hasn't been working very well.

And then, on top of \$700 billion, just this last week, or week before last, we spent another 800-something billion dollars. At least in the House it was 840. They backed it off a small amount. Now, when you put \$700 billion, \$800 billion together, we're talking some change, aren't we?

I notice we're joined by another doctor—this must be doctors night—from Georgia over in the Chamber, my good friend, Dr. GINGREY, Congressman GINGREY. I just would yield some time to you.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman from Missouri yielding. And I will say that every night is doctors night.

It's always fun to be on the floor, of course, talking about issues like this. It's so important to the American people. And of course I know you've been talking about the economic "spendulous" bill that's already passed, already signed into law by President Obama.

And now today, of course, we vote on this omnibus bill, I think nine categories of spending. They were sort of left over, wasn't it, from 2008, from the last Congress, the last fiscal year. This should have been done and completed by October 1st. The end of the fiscal year was September 31, 2008. And here we have these nine spending bills that we throw into one big package, makes it extremely confusing.

So it is important, I think, for Members to come to the floor, Mr. Speaker, to explain to both Republicans and Democrats, really what we did here today.

And, of course, this bill passed. It certainly didn't pass with our vote and our support. And the thing that I want to point out—and maybe you've already said this, but if you have, it's okay, because we can't say it often enough. The fact that, without considering the economic stimulus package, the trillion dollars that's going to help the economic recovery bill, without considering that, we have increased discretionary spending over 2008 levels.

And I have a chart to show it. We have increased discretionary spending by 7½ to 8 percent. And I'm pretty sure I'm right on this, Mr. Speaker. This was the largest increase in discretionary spending since the Carter administration. We have not had an overall 8 percent increase in discretionary spending in recent years, certainly not ever during the Bush administration, during his 8 years.

Mr. AKIN. Reclaiming my time for just a minute, I'd like to highlight what you just said.

□ 1745

Because a lot of times what we hear our opponents, the Democrats, saying is, "Well, you don't have an idea. You don't have a plan. What's your idea? You're just always saying negative things about ours." Well, that's not true.

I mean, just starting with what we did today, the number I saw was that there was an 8 percent increase in a whole series of categories, an 8 percent increase. Now, the average household in my district has not had an 8 percent increase this year in their paychecks, and yet the government is going to push this 8 percent. So let's be specific. I don't want to be negative here. I would like to say positive things.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. If the gentleman would yield.

Mr. AKIN. I will yield.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, the story is much worse. We are at 8, 8-0. 8.0 percent is bad enough as I tried to point out, but let me actually show this chart that I will hold up to my colleagues. I thank my physician colleague for helping me with the poster.

This in the blue shows the amount of spending for each one of these categories in this omnibus bill—Agriculture, Commerce, Justice, Energy, Water, Financial Services, Interior, Legislative branch, Labor-HHS, State, Foreign Ops, and Transportation-HUD. This is in the blue—what we had spent in billions in fiscal year 2008. This is already enacted. The red is what we did today. Let's just take these nine categories and look, Mr. Speaker, very closely. On Agriculture, we increased spending over '08 by 45 percent, Commerce and Justice by 41 percent, Energy and Water by 151 percent, and on and on and on.

You might say, "Well, wait a minute now. You just said the overall increased spending was 8 percent." What we need to understand is, in this economic stimulus package, much of that money was in these categories that should have been enacted under regular order. When we do these appropriations bills and we go through subcommittee and committee in regular order, that money—much of that—was in these different categories that had nothing to do, really, with job creation or very little to do with job creation. When you add that money out of the economic stimulus package to these categories, it's not 8 percent. I say to the gentleman from Missouri it is 80 percent—8-0 point, 80 percent.

Mr. AKIN. Reclaiming my time, you make an excellent point. So what's really going on here is there are two bills that are influencing those categories that you show on your bar graphs.

The first bill you call the "spendulous." I'm maybe not quite so kind. I call it the "porkulous." They've really nothing to do with job creation at all. They had to do with a whole lot of expansion of government programs and government spending.

So, first of all, we took this about \$800 billion. Now let's just stop for a minute and put that into perspective. One of the things that's really big that we buy, if you want to think of big things, is aircraft carriers. We have eleven aircraft carriers in our Navy, and we protect them. We put ships around them. We don't want people to sink our aircraft carriers because they're expensive. Now, if you take the average cost of our eleven aircraft carriers and divide this into these porkulous or spendulous bills, you've got 250 aircraft carriers. I mean I don't know if that would go all the way across the State of Georgia or not, but those are a lot of aircraft carriers—250 of them—when we only have eleven in the Navy. Now, if you want to get you one of them Cadillac kind of aircraft carriers, the extra long version with the super electronics and better planes and all, well now, you'll only get 100-and-some aircraft carriers.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. If the gentleman would yield, with that number, if you put them end to end, that could go from Pearl Harbor to Wake Island.

Mr. AKIN. Yes. Reclaiming my time, you could also look at it from this point of view, which would be that the interest we pay on that amount of money in this porkulous bill would buy nine new aircraft carriers every year, just the interest on that money, or you could look at it another way. You could say all we've been hearing about is how expensive the war in Iraq is. Well, add up every day of the war in Iraq. Add it all together. We're talking way more money in the first 5 weeks than what we spend in Iraq. In the House version, you've put Iraq and Afghanistan together, and it's still more money. So this is a pretty good chunk of change.

What you're saying, gentlemen, is that a lot of that had nothing to do with jobs. It was just putting more money into government programs. So the chart that you show there didn't really show an 8 percent increase. What it really showed was way up there. What did you say? I'll yield. What was the actual number when you added it up?

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Well, reclaiming my time, of course the amount of money, I think, that we were spending in this bill, just in the omnibus, was \$410 billion, but I think that it's something like \$300 billion additional. Anyway, overall, it brings it up to 80 percent.

You know, you wonder. We heard from the President last night in his semi State of the Union Address, and he talked about, you know, fiscal responsibility in this budget that he's going to present to us on Thursday for 2010 and how it's going to be very fiscally responsible and belt-tightening. He has an opportunity, colleagues—doesn't he?—to veto this omnibus. This is his first opportunity. What can he say?

I mean we were criticized by the Democratic—now majority—when they were in the minority. President Bush didn't veto one spending bill, and on many occasions what came out of the Congress was a plus-up from what former President Bush had asked for. So the argument was, if you Republicans are fiscally responsible, why wouldn't your President veto this spending bill? In the first place, why did you plus them up? Here the Democrats said, "Well, you bring us in, and we're going to change all of that." Here is the very first opportunity. Well, I challenge President Obama:

Veto this sucker. Send it back, and say, "You know, we don't need an 80 percent increase in discretionary spending." As you've pointed out, Mr. AKIN, much of that spending will be there 10 years from now.

Mr. AKIN. Reclaiming my time, what you're really saying is what we passed on this floor today, in and of itself, was an 8 percent increase, and that 8 percent increase is the biggest we've had in these categories since Carter was President, but that 8 percent is deceiving because you can add to it all of the stuff in the porkulous bill or a lot of what was in the porkulous bill, and that's going to run it up to an 80 percent increase. So what we're really talking about is a massive increase in government programs.

I see my other doctor friend, Congressman BROWN, from Georgia. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. BROWN of Georgia. Well, thank you, Mr. AKIN. I just want to point out something here, too.

As Dr. GINGREY has come on the floor, he and I have the mutual thought that President Obama has promised the American people that he would veto any bill that had earmarks in it. I call upon the President to veto

this bill that we passed today. It has over 9,000 earmarks in it.

Mr. AKIN. Reclaiming my time, gentlemen, I heard it was 7,500 earmarks.

Mr. BROWN of Georgia. Well, whatever.

Mr. AKIN. He said, if it has earmarks in it, he's going to veto it, but what do you think they'll say—that those really aren't earmarks? Those things that look like earmarks and that smell like earmarks aren't earmarks? Is that what we're going to hear?

I yield.

Mr. BROWN of Georgia. You don't know what he's going to say. We heard last night that that porkulous bill as you and I call it—I call it a steamroll of socialism being shoved down the throats of the American public. He said last night in his State of the Nation Address that there were no earmarks in that bill. The whole non-stimulus bill was earmarks. It was payback to all of the liberal folks who supported him and who supported our Democratic majority.

But the point I wanted to make is that we hear from our friends on the left that Republicans don't have any ideas or that they're old ideas. The thing is that that's absolutely false in itself. Just on today's bill, I offered an amendment that the Democrats would not take that actually cut the discretionary spending out of this bill by 10 percent. American families are cutting their budgets. They're hurting.

Mr. AKIN. Reclaiming my time, you offered an amendment. It said we want to cut 10 percent out of this bill. When you made that amendment, did you bring that amendment to the floor, and did you have a chance to vote on it?

I yield.

Mr. BROWN of Georgia. Well, no, they wouldn't let it. Now, the thing is we heard from the leadership on the Democratic side that we were going to have a new era of openness and fairness, but we weren't allowed any amendments. The Rules Committee ruled that this was going to be a closed rule, that they wouldn't accept my amendment or any others. The Republican party had another amendment to just freeze spending across the board, not increase it, just not bring this bill to the floor, just continue to have another continuing resolution to continue current spending for the rest of this budget year. That wouldn't be considered.

We've brought plan after plan, project after project. We've brought forth to the Democratic majority many ideas that would stimulate the economy, that would create jobs, that would leave money in the hands of the people as well as small business, that wouldn't borrow from our grandchildren, but the Democratic majority won't even consider those things, and they've totally shut us out.

Mr. AKIN. Reclaiming my time, gentlemen, I see my congressional friend from Georgia.

Dr. GINGREY, I yield to you.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. AKIN, thank you. I just wanted to add to what Dr. BROWN was saying as to that continuing resolution amendment.

In other words, let's just stay at 2008 levels, the ones that we showed in the blue on this chart. Let's just stay right there. Dr. BROWN was explaining that amendment. In that amendment, if we did that—and I'll ask Dr. BROWN or I'll ask Representative AKIN—how many earmarks would be in that?

I'll go ahead and answer that before I yield back my time. The answer is it would be a big nada, zero, none. There would be no earmarks.

Now, some Members don't ask for earmarks. I've probably got six or eight earmarks. I have, you know, transparent, light of day, good things for my district that have been vetted thoroughly, but that would wipe out all of my earmarks, and those other 7,500 or 9,000, whatever the number is, I'm fine with that, and I think my constituents, in the interest of fiscal responsibility, would be fine with it as well.

So I think that's a point that we needed to make, and I yield back.

Mr. AKIN. So, reclaiming my time, what we're saying is one simple solution would be to freeze the discretionary budget. That would probably be the first step of a supply side solution to get the economy going, wouldn't it, if we'd just simply freeze discretionary spending? Then if what we did was we allowed certain selective tax increases in a very short period of time, you'd see the stock market jump, and you'd see jobs being created, and the whole economy would start to move again.

I mean this isn't something that's too complicated. It's just several of us talking this evening. There are a number of ways it could be done. It's not that complicated.

One of the places that you might start would be with the fact that the corporate income tax in America is the second highest in the world. You could get rid of all of the little bells and whistles in that corporate tax and just knock it back a good number of percent, and that in and of itself could have a great influence in creating jobs. If you on top of that were to freeze the government spending and were also to maintain dividend and capital gains, I don't know how many months it would be, but you'd see a neck-snapping turnaround. There are solutions to these problems, and the fact of the matter is that the people who are in charge now are unwilling to look at those solutions.

I yield back to Dr. GINGREY.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Well, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Again, I would just make the point that the President is a fantastic speaker, and he absolutely can talk the talk as good as anybody, certainly as any President whom I can remember going way back to JFK. Yet he has not had the opportunity to prove that he can

walk the walk. I hope he can. I don't have any reason to think that he can't, but he does have an opportunity—doesn't he, my colleagues?—with this omnibus bill that was passed on the floor of this House today. President Obama has an opportunity to show that he can walk the walk.

Now, if he's not willing to veto this, what possibly could be his excuse? Would he say, "Well, you know, this was something that happened in 2008" or "this was a fiscal year 2009 budget, and it really is leftover business, and it's not my problem. It's somebody else's problem"? You know, that would be like an off-duty fireman walking in the streets of New York, coming upon a fire and having a hose there and a truck and saying, "Look," you know, "I'm not on duty. It's not my responsibility, and I'm not going to put the fire out." Hey, he's the fireman and chief. It's his responsibility to put the darned fire out, and he has got an opportunity to do it. He needs to walk the walk.

Mr. AKIN. Well, reclaiming my time, I guess what can happen down here—and we should guard against this—is we can get a little cynical. I believe it was the week before last that this House unanimously passed a resolution that was saying that we were going to have 48 hours to take a look at this 1,000-page bill that was coming down the pike.

Mr. BROWN of Georgia. On the Internet.

Mr. AKIN. We were going to have 48 hours because there were 1,000 pages, and there were all kinds of things in there. Doesn't it make sense to allow the staff and different people to read over it before they take the vote? Everybody said "yes," so we voted unanimously for 48 hours.

The bill comes out. We get our first copy at 11:30 on Thursday night, and of course we have lots of staffers sitting around the office, waiting at 11:30 at night. The next day, we went straight to a vote on this.

□ 1800

And we're told that this is going to be transparency and openness, and it does tend to make you a little bit cynical when we say one thing and we do something else.

Now, the promise has been made here, if there's an earmark, we're going to veto it. Now, do any of you want to make any bets as to what's going to happen to this little puppy?

I don't mean to cause you trouble, Congressman BROWN.

Mr. BROWN of Georgia. Well, in Georgia, in my part of the woods, we say, "That's hogwash," the claims that we hear.

We've heard rhetoric, both from the President as well as the leadership in this House, about fairness. Well, they're not being fair to Republicans with the closed rule so we can't present our ideas and all.

But the thing is, it's not only not fair to Republicans, it's not fair to the men



and women of America. It's not fair to the working families of America. It's not fair to the small business of America. Because we're being overrun with this socialistic idea that's going to destroy jobs, it's going to create more economic problems, just as we saw during the Great Depression.

All the great spending, all the big growth of Federal Government that we're seeing just markedly grow with these "porkulous" bills—the Wall Street bail-out bill, the non-stimulus stimulus bill we had 2 weeks ago, the bill we have today, and we're going to get another one tomorrow, and we're going to see more and more and more. And the thing is, it's not fair to the American people because what we're doing is we're killing our economy.

Mr. AKIN. Reclaiming my time.

The American people, in a way, have a way to vote. The people that have money vote on the stock market, and the stock market has been saying, "We're not buying all of this stuff that's coming out of Congress. We're not convinced." And the stock market, every time we do another one of these massive spending bills, the stock market goes down even farther. So that's some kind of an indication that all is not well.

I yield to my friend from Georgia.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, all is not well. And we're not talking about our physical health here, but we're talking about our economic health. And, indeed, it will lead to poor physical health because people will be so frustrated and anxious and depressed.

One of our colleagues on our side of the aisle, a gentleman from Kansas, TODD TIAHRT, I spoke to Representative TIAHRT earlier today, Mr. Speaker, and he asked me if I would like to sign on to a bill that he is going to introduce in the next couple of days that said, look, we're not going to have any more stimulus, any more emergency bailout, rescue packages, whether we're talking about General Motors or Chrysler or AIG or Bear Stearns or Bank of America—you know, I could go on and on.

TODD TIAHRT is a strong fiscal conservative, and I said, "Man, I'm so glad you're doing that," because, as the gentleman from Missouri was just saying, the one thing the stock market hates is uncertainty. And we have had nothing but uncertainty since the beginning of this 111th Congress, and they don't know what to expect. So people keep thinking, well, am I going to buy a Bank of America stock at \$4 a share when, the next bit of bad news comes out of Washington, it will be \$2 a share? And that's exactly what's happening.

So I say "hurrah" to TODD TIAHRT, and I hope his bill will see the light of day.

Mr. AKIN. Reclaiming my time.

One of the things that strikes me and is of great concern to me is something that I believe was in the dustbin of his-

tory in our thinking for many years now, and that was the old Soviet Socialist Republic, the USSR. If you think back before the Berlin Wall fell—some of us are old enough to remember—that was a formidable—and we were concerned about the USSR, but we didn't ever believe that its economics were any good because we knew they were a bunch of socialists over there. That's what the "USSR" part was all about. So, in a way, when we saw the Berlin Wall come down, we could kind of catch our breath, but we kind of laughed at them as saying, "See, we knew that old socialism wasn't going to work."

And what was that country based on? The basic assumption was that the government is going to provide you what? Well, I guess one of the first things would be the government's going to provide you with education. And then another thing the government's going to provide is health care, which I know, as a couple of medical doctors, this is something that we know a little bit about when the government decides to get in the health care business. And then, of course, we're going to have the government provide you with food and housing, you see. And then the government's going to give you a job.

And that was the heart—aside from being just sort of antireligious, the USSR, that was the heart of their program. The government is going to do all of this stuff.

And now, just a few weeks ago, the cover of a major news magazine in America, it says, "We're All Socialists Now." When I saw that, I felt a little frustrated, because I'm not a socialist. And the people I represent are not socialists. And they didn't like socialism, and they don't want the government running everything in their lives.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Joe the Plumber is not a socialist either. It's all about that income redistribution. You remember that phrase?

Mr. AKIN. Reclaiming my time.

One of the things that's of concern is that if we follow in the path of the model that doesn't work, the Soviet Union, with the government trying to run all of these things, the government is terribly inefficient. People may think and complain to you doctors that medicine is awfully expensive today. Well, if they think medicine is expensive today, let them get a snout full of what it's like when the government runs it, with all of that efficiency. About half of the health care dollars in America are already going through the government, and that's part of what's made it less efficient and expensive.

So if we move in the direction of what I'm reading, if you read between the lines of the speech last night, we're talking about a single-payer system like Canada. And the bill that we passed already has the language in it saying the government can ration your health care, and I don't think that makes for good quality health care.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. As a physician, let me tell you, it's not going to

Government regulation is what's driven up the cost of health care markedly.

When I was practicing medicine down in rural south Georgia, as a good example, Congress passed CLIA, the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Act. I had a lab with quality control because I, as a physician, wanted to make sure that any lab test I did was accurate. We spent a lot of time, energy, and money making sure that those tests were accurate.

Well, CLIA shut down my lab. If somebody came in to see me with a red sore throat, had white patches on the throat, running a fever, aching all over, I would do a CBC, a complete blood count, to see if they had a bacterial infection and thus needed antibiotics, like penicillin, or if they had a viral infection. Both clinical pictures could be exactly the same. Even allergies will present with the same clinical picture, even the fever.

So I would do this simple blood test. I charged \$12 for the test. CLIA shut my lab down. I had to send my patients over to the local hospital, and they charged \$75. I could do the test in 5 minutes. It would take 2 to 3 hours to get the results from the local hospital.

Now, what did that do across the whole of the spectrum of health care? It markedly drove the cost of—insurance and all health care markedly were elevated because of that.

And Congress, not long ago, passed HIPAA. I call all of these things "critters," and if you see a critter coming down the pike, you better hold on to your wallet because it's going to take a big bite out of it. But HIPAA has cost the health care industry billions of dollars and hasn't paid for the first Aspirin to treat the headaches that it's created.

So if we get the regulatory burden off of health care and we let the doctor-patient relationship be how health care decisions are made, we can literally lower the costs. But this "porkulous" bill is a giant push towards socialist medical care here in America, too. So it gives me great concern for me and for my physician colleagues, but it even gives me more concern for my patients.

It's been said around here, if you think medicine is expensive now, wait until it's free and provided for by the government. We're going to have terrible quality or degradation of quality of health care. We're not going to have the innovation. We're not going to be developing the new drugs and procedures that we're doing today on the free enterprise system, and it's going to be disastrous.

Mr. AKIN. Reclaiming my time.

I appreciate you being a medical doctor. You've seen first-hand examples where government intervention in the marketplace is driving up costs for everybody. And the more areas we get into—just like the Soviet Union, when we get into food and clothing and housing and education, the more the government gets its nose into all of those

areas, and the size of the government grows, as we've just seen—it wasn't just 8 percent today, but you add the 8 to all of that before from the "porkulous" bill, we're talking about a massive increase in government.

And the Republicans did make some mistakes. We spent more money than we should have, but it's nothing on the scale of what we're talking about here.

We're joined by a very distinguished colleague of mine from Louisiana. And, Congressman SCALISE, we'd appreciate if you could join us.

And I yield time.

Mr. SCALISE. Thank you. I want to thank the gentleman from Missouri. What we've been talking about is the concern that a lot of us have with the runaway spending we have here in Washington.

And as we all sat in this Chamber last night and listened to the President, there were a number of things he said that I think we all agreed with. One of the things that he harped on was the concern about adding more money, billions and trillions of dollars, to the national debt, and I share that concern.

But I think what's even of more concern is that, if we look at what's happened in these last 6 weeks, we've seen not a reduction in spending, not a reduction in debts, we've seen a dramatic increase. In fact, in just the last 6 weeks since Barack Obama has been President, we've seen over \$2 trillion added to the national debt. That's a 20 percent increase in the national debt. And that's the burden that our children and our grandchildren are going to have to inherit.

Mr. AKIN. Reclaiming my time for a minute.

You're saying a 20 percent increase in the national debt. So you add up all of the national debt since the country was born, you put that all together, and you're saying we added 20 percent to that in a period of 6 weeks?

Mr. SCALISE. In a period of 6 weeks between the spending bill that was passed and signed into law last week, added \$800 billion in new government spending—not a bill to help stimulate our economy; a bill to massively grow the size of government, many programs, as you discussed, that are permanent programs, not one-time infrastructure spending.

The other thing—and tomorrow there will be a bill filed; the President will be presenting his new budget. The expectations of what we're hearing is that that budget will be over \$1 trillion out of balance. More money added to the national debt.

And on top of that, a bill that a lot of us that are concerned about this runaway spending voted against, but a bill that passed today was this omnibus bill: \$400 billion of additional spending, representing an 8 percent increase in government spending at a time when States and families across this country are cutting back their spending because of tough economic times. Seems

like Washington's the only place going on a spending spree.

It's hard to picture when yesterday you hear somebody talking about the dangers of adding more money to the national debt, ironically on Mardi Gras day, and it seems like today and tomorrow, when these bills are filed, adding trillions more debt, it seems like the same people are trying to act like the King of Carnival, throwing beads and trinkets to people with more government spending.

This was a picture that was actually in the New Orleans newspaper yesterday on Mardi Gras Day, and it talked about and it shows people throwing money, literally throwing money from a float. And it's titled "Stimulus," and they said, "We'll worry about the hangover tomorrow."

And the sad part of it is, it's not our money that they're throwing. It's not only the taxpayers' money, but it's our children and grandchildren's money that they're throwing, because this is money we don't have. This is money that's going to go out and be printed up on a printing press because we don't have that money sitting in a bank somewhere.

And so it adds more money—over 20 percent in 6 weeks has been added to the national debt. And that's the burden our children and grandchildren will inherit. And this has to end.

Mr. AKIN. Reclaiming my time.

You're talking about, in the last 6 or 7 weeks, we have added 20 percent to the debt. And yet, when you take a look at the money that we've spent, it's not going to do any good to help us with joblessness, it's not going to get the economy going, it just is flat not going to work. Because we can already see that it didn't work when you used the same approach during the "Raw Deal" or the New Deal. Henry Morgenthau says it won't work. He's the guy that engineered the plan. He says it won't work. And the Japanese tried it, and it didn't work for them. And yet we have solutions to the problem that will work which are being ignored.

You know, gentlemen, one of the things that I think we have to be careful of: We are in a very difficult time in America right now, and a lot of people recognize that.

And we'll have to continue this next week on Wednesday. And I really appreciate my good friend from Louisiana joining us, Congressman SCALISE.

#### REVISIONS TO THE 302(a) ALLOCATIONS FOR THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEARS 2008 AND 2009

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. HALVORSON). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SPRATT. Madam Speaker, under section 301(c) of S. Con. Res. 70, the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2009,

I hereby submit for printing in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD revised 302(a) allocations for the Committee on Appropriations for fiscal years 2008 and 2009. Section 301(c) of S. Con. Res. 70 directs the chairman of the Committee on the Budget to adjust discretionary spending limits for certain program integrity initiatives described in section 301(a) of the concurrent resolution. A corresponding table is attached.

#### DISCRETIONARY APPROPRIATIONS—APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE 302(A) ALLOCATION

(In millions of dollars)

	BA	OT
Current allocation:		
Fiscal Year 2008 .....	1,050,478	1,094,944
Fiscal Year 2009 .....	1,011,718	1,106,112
Change for H. R. 1105 program integrity initiatives:		
Fiscal Year 2008 .....	0	0
Fiscal Year 2009 .....	968	892
Revised allocation:		
Fiscal Year 2008 .....	1,050,478	1,094,944
Fiscal Year 2009 .....	1,012,686	1,107,004

□ 1815

#### 30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, we are here to convene what has unfortunately become a little bit more infrequent in this legislative session, our 30-Something Working Group. We're so glad that the Speaker of the House has once again convened the 30-Something members of the Democratic Caucus to work on issues affecting not only our generation of Americans who are struggling like everyone else with this very difficult economy, but also on behalf of all Americans who are crying out right now to the Obama administration, to this Congress, to both Democrats and Republicans, to step up to the plate and help them start making ends meet.

And we're going to be here today with my colleague, Mr. ALTMIRE—hopefully we will be joined a little bit later by one of our new members of the 30-Something Caucus, Mr. BOCCIERI—to discuss really what I think is becoming a historic moment in this Nation's history as President Obama challenges this Congress and this Nation to do two things; to step up to the plate and enact short-term stimulus to create jobs in this country, to put people back to work, to make banks start lending again, and to get our economy recovering, but also to do something else; to recognize that this economy has been imperiled for a very long time by a weak energy policy, by a crippling health care system with rising costs, and a relative lack of investment in education compared to those countries that we compete with. And his challenge to us last night was to do what we need to do now and to come together to rebuild this economy in the short term, but also in the long term.